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PROGRAM.....

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YOUNG FOLKS' PROGRAM

Fri. Nov. 11/27.

(NOT FOR PUBLICATION)

No. 6. Doves of Peace and War.

ANNOUNCEMENT: Uncle Abe of the Department of Agriculture is here to see his nephews and nieces again --- especially his nephew, Jim. There's Uncle Abe sitting down there in the big chair ---- and here comes Jimmy! Let's gather in closely, so we can hear what they have to say.

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JIM: Uncle Abe, you promised to tell me a story about pigeons.

UNCLE ABE: So I did. I guess I'll have to do that; especially as this is Armistice Day, the anniversary of the end of the World War.

JIM: What's that got to do with pigeons?

UNCLE ABE: Well, you know, we use the dove as a sign or symbol of peace. We speak of the "dove of peace".

JIM: Well?

UNCLE ABE: Pigeons are just big doves ---- and besides that we used pigeons in the army in France in the World War. Pigeons are doves of war as well as doves of peace.---Did you ever hear about that pigeon hero named "Cher Ami"?

JIM: Tell me about him?

UNCLE ABE: "Cher Ami" was the homing pigeon who helped save the famous "Lost Battalion" in the battle in the Argonne woods. The Americans were advancing along a wide front. Part of one division became cut off from the rest of the American forces, and from their own supplies. They were completely surrounded by the enemy. And the enemy troops were gradually closing in on them. If they were to be saved, it was necessary to get word to the American commander telling him their position. But no messenger could get through the fierce machine gun and artillery fire; that is, no messenger except "Cher Ami."

The message was placed in a little tube fastened to "Cher Ami's" leg. He was turned loose and started with the message back to headquarters 25 miles away. But he had to fly through that machine gun and artillery fire. A bullet shattered one leg, but "Cher Ami" kept flying. Another bullet pierced his breast, but he did not stop. In 25 minutes he covered the 25 miles. He reached the American lines with the message in the message tube hanging by the ligaments of the wounded leg. Acting on the news in the message, American forces advanced to the rescue of the "Lost Battalion." "Cher Ami" lived a few months and then died from the effects of his wounds. He is now mounted and preserved in the United States National Museum at Washington, D. C.

10/10/1918

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R-Y. F. 11/11/27.

JIM: How did he happen to be along with the "Lost Battalion"?

UNCLE ABE: Oh, homing pigeons were a regular part of the army. In modern warfare shell-fire often prevents radio and telephone messages getting through; runners are often delayed; and signals to be read by sight are often blotted out by smoke, dust, or fog. Pigeons go right through.

Lofts or home stations are established behind the battle lines. The pigeon are kept there until they become used to their new home. Then they are taken out hungry in baskets a short distance and turned loose. When they get home they are fed. The distance is increased to 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 50, and 100 miles. When they have been trained, those to be used with the soldiers at the front are put in a basket and carried on the back of a soldier. When a message is to be sent, it is written on thin paper and the paper is put in little tubes or capsules of thin aluminum, which is fastened to the pigeon's leg by a copper band. Then the pigeon flies home taking the message with him.

JIM: What's the training for?

UNCLE ABE: To help them remember. A homing pigeon is helped a good bit by keen eyesight and a wonderfully good memory, but the main thing is the homing instinct, not the training.

JIM: How does a pigeon know it's so important to get the message there?

UNCLE ABE: The homing pigeon isn't worried about the message. He's bent on getting home. There's an old saying that he who gets homesick will get home. You know, the pigeons and doves are great home-lovers. Our wild mourning doves, for instance, are great home-makers. They pair off and spend the summer raising their young. They do not make very good nests, but "be it ever so humble there's no place like home" to a dove. He is anxious to get back when he's taken away from it. That's why those other doves, the homing pigeons, dare shell fire.

JIM: How can they find the way through smoke from the guns and shells?

UNCLE ABE: By that same sense of direction that ducks and other migratory birds have. We don't know just what it is, but it's certain they have it developed better than we have, if we've got it at all.

JIM: Where did homing pigeons come from, Uncle Abe?

UNCLE ABE: They were developed years and years ago by Belgians and English. All our domestic pigeons were developed mostly from the Rock Dove of Europe. Such varieties as the pouter and the fan-tail, were developed by carefully selecting and mating to bring out the different characteristics you see in different kinds of tame pigeons. The rock dove from which the tame pigeons were developed is a bigger bird than our mourning dove.

JIM: We used to have wild pigeons in this country didn't we?

UNCLE ABE: That wild or passenger pigeon, as it is sometimes called, was plentiful in your great-granddaddy's day. But that wild pigeon had a different habit from



R-Y. F. 11/11/27.

his cousins our mourning doves and the rock doves of Europe. The rock dove and mourning dove live most of the time in pairs off to themselves. When they gather in flocks the flocks are comparatively small. But the wild pigeons gathered in flocks in which were millions and millions. There were so many in these flocks that in the early days they would darken the sun for hours like one huge cloud, as they passed. When they settled on the trees at night there were so many of them their weight often broke down the trees. Your great-granddaddy used to go out and knock them off the trees by the hundreds with a stick. It looked like then that there were so many wild pigeons that they would always be with us----- Do you see any around here now?

JIM: I never did see any.

UNCLE ABE: I know you never did. And that just shows what sometimes happens when birds are not protected. Back in the pioneer days wild pigeons were probably the most plentiful birds on earth. In 1914, just about the time the war broke out, the last passenger pigeon died in the Cincinnati Zoo. He'd been kept for years as a curiosity.

JIM: And there are none anywhere in the world today?

UNCLE ABE: Not a single one. The passenger pigeon is as extinct as the Dodo ---- and by the way, the Dodo was kin to the dove, too. He was a great big, awkward, flightless pigeon.

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1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that this is crucial for the company's financial health and for providing reliable information to stakeholders.

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